

## Editorial Note

The present volume in the Donner Institute series *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* has the theme ‘Postmodern Spirituality’. A few words on what we mean by this might be called for, and to this purpose, we quote a few lines from our description of the subject in the Call for Papers sent out in preparation of the symposium: ‘Postmodern spirituality is here, in contrast to traditional spirituality, understood as a form of spirituality that appears as an alternative to conventional religion. It refers to the way people outside of the established religions and religious movements handle existential and spiritual issues. They do not choose “ready-made” solutions, but in true eclectic spirit themselves decide what they want to believe in and create their own combinations and sets of answers to existential questions. . . . Postmodern spirituality has an individualistic image. It is spiritual in the sense of being the opposite of materialistic, and it is intramundane in contrast to extramundane religiosity; it is essentially about what the world is like and how one should live in it. . . .’

Basically, it was this description of the theme that inspired the writing of the articles included in the present volume based on papers read at the symposium on Postmodern Spirituality held in Åbo, Finland on 11–13 June 2008. Although we, the Organizing Committee, thought our description was excellent, it turned out, as the readers themselves will realise, that most of the writers had their own, or a so-called stipulative definition of ‘Postmodern Spirituality’, which is either openly declared or implicit in their text. We were not, however, very surprised—we knew that this is a relatively new area of research and that it will take a long time yet for a consensus to be reached on central concepts and definitions.

Nevertheless, the Organizing Committee is quite pleased with the results published in the present volume—and we hope that the readers will also be so.